

I just wanted to say that we are so honored to have him here today. He has made such a dramatic difference in our community, along with his colleagues, Father Daniel, Father Ambrose, and Father Gabriel; and a great difference in my family's life as well.

We are so grateful to you for your service to our community and to your faith, and to our faith, and for making such a difference in our lives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

WORKERS AND FAMILIES ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE NEW TAX CUT LAW

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, as I travel to each corner of my district, I hear from workers and families who are optimistic about the new tax cut law and what it means for their pocketbooks.

There is a momentum in our economy, and the latest jobs report from February is another piece of positive news. Last month, the economy added 313,000 jobs, far exceeding expectations; the unemployment rate remained at a 17-year low for the fifth consecutive month; and labor force participation increased by more than 800,000 workers, the biggest surge in 15 years.

Earlier this week, the National Federation of Independent Business released a survey that found small-business owners' confidence in the economy is soaring, and they are prepared to hire and raise wages without a government mandate. Imagine that.

Madam Speaker, these are encouraging signs that our policies of reducing excessive red tape and cutting taxes are working.

Let's build on these results and continue to advance solutions that improve the lives of the people we represent.

CELEBRATING 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, this weekend, Irish Americans will celebrate St. Patrick's Day with parades and parties of every level of exuberance, including in my hometown of Buffalo, New York.

Buffalo's St. Patrick's Day celebration is one of the most spirited in America.

This year is a special celebration as it marks the 20-year anniversary of peace in Northern Ireland. The 1998

Good Friday Agreement brought peace to Catholics and Protestants after 700 years of armed conflict.

This peace belongs to the people of Northern Ireland and to the world.

Sinn Féin leaders Gerry Adams and the late Martin McGuinness, along with the Democratic Unionist Party's Reverend Ian Paisley took a courageous step no one believed was possible 20 years ago. They denounced violence and committed themselves to a peaceful power-sharing and reconciliation to live in peace together.

Madam Speaker, let this St. Patrick's Day and the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement stand as a shining light of hope for a gentler America and a more peaceful world.

CIVIL WAR IN SYRIA

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to shine light on the ongoing tragedy in Syria.

Today marks 7 years of civil war in Syria, 7 years of indiscriminate killing of women and children, 7 years of intermittent chemical attacks on civilians by the Assad regime, 7 years of bombings, of people thrown out of their homes, of children whose youth has been stolen from them.

The ongoing tragedy in eastern Ghouta is just the most recent of horrific events perpetrated by the Assad regime and their Iranian-backed militia.

The White Helmets group reports that 800 civilians have been killed in the past 2 weeks as the Assad regime continues to pound the rebel-held area, despite the ongoing humanitarian cease-fire.

The blatant disregard regime forces have for civilian life is nothing short of despicable.

We must continue to be engaged in efforts to support the Syrian Democratic Forces and other allies that believe in a free, democratic, and independent Syria.

Without U.S. leadership, the carnage will continue and we will be left with meaningless U.N. resolutions. We must stand with our allies to stop this devastating carnage that is tearing apart families and ruining countless lives.

HONORING DEPUTY DAVID LEE'SEAN MANNING

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise today to honor the life and work of a young 24-year-old deputy sheriff from Edgecombe County, North Carolina, who was tragically killed during a traffic stop in his community on Sunday, March 11, 2018.

Deputy David Lee'Sean Manning lost his life when his patrol vehicle crashed while engaged in the traffic stop.

The elected sheriff of Edgecombe County, my friend, Sheriff Clee Atkinson, informed me that this loss has resulted in tremendous sadness for the Manning family and the entire law enforcement community, an emotion that we all certainly understand.

On behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the 750,000 citizens of North Carolina's First Congressional District, we honor the life and service of Deputy David Lee'Sean Manning.

May God continue to embrace David's biological family, embrace his law enforcement family in the weeks and months to come, and give them the solace that they need to continue with their lives.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Public Schools Week to recognize the incredible work in public education done every day in every State in our Union.

I have the honor of representing some of the finest public schools in the Nation. This did not happen by accident. Our public schools lead the country because of the tremendous work of our public educators.

I attended public schools, I respect our teachers, and I proudly support our public schools here in Congress.

I know the work of educators can be difficult, but the life of a teacher is a vocation, not an occupation. Educators give their lives in service to future generations of leaders, thinkers, writers, doctors, scientists, and visionaries.

We need teachers, and we need the public education system to remain strong in the United States. Public schools are where our students realize their talents and their potential.

We need good educators to continue offering encouragement and advice and to be champions and mentors.

Let us celebrate this Public Schools Week by thanking the teachers and educators in our lives.

PUTTING PENSIONS BACK ON SOLID GROUND

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, many pension plans across America are on the brink of failure and threatened by massive cuts. If nothing is done, 200 multiemployer plans are projected to fail, many within the next 10 years, and the impacts will be felt by Americans in every State in our country.

Cuts to these pensions would be economically devastating for 1.5 million people who have earned their livings as carpenters, truck drivers, iron and steel workers, bricklayers, and painters.

They paid into these plans. After a lifetime of hard work, they deserve to retire with dignity and peace of mind.

If these plans fail, taxpayers could have to pay billions of dollars if the Federal Government's Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation fails.

That is why Democrats have proposed A Better Deal to save our pensions that provides financing to put failing pension plans back on solid ground to ensure that they can meet their commitments to retirees today and workers for decades to come, prevents a single dollar of cuts to benefits retirees have earned, and it puts safeguards in place so that pension plans remain strong in order to be there for today's workers when they retire.

We need to bring these proposals to the floor so we can work together to protect the pensions that American workers have earned.

CELEBRATING FIVE GENERATIONS AND 125 YEARS OF VARNS AND HOOVER HARDWARE

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Varns and Hoover Hardware, which has been a fixture in the Middlebury community for more than 125 years.

The success and longevity of this family-owned business lies in the family's dedication to serving their neighbors and providing high-quality products with a friendly smile.

Small businesses like this are the backbone of the American economy, and it is a privilege to represent a family so devoted to the prosperity of their community for so many years.

To honor Varns and Hoover Hardware is to honor what it means to achieve the American Dream.

With ownership now being passed down to the fifth generation family member, Nathan Miller, I am grateful to be able to recognize such a pivotal moment in the history of this Hoosier family, their small business, and the community that they serve.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Varns and Hoover Hardware and in wishing them the best in all the years to come.

REMEMBERING BOB BANUELOS

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of a remarkable member of my staff and a remarkable member of my community, Bob Banuelos, who passed away suddenly last week.

Bob spent over 30 years working for the people of Orange County. Before joining my team, he also worked for my predecessor, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez.

Bob had deep roots in our community. He grew up on a small family farm in Fountain Valley and was a long-time member of the Orange County political environment.

Bob worked for the less fortunate throughout his community, and he was a friend to everybody he met.

Bob was also the first Native American candidate to run for Congress in Orange County in 1992, and he came close to winning. He changed Orange County politics forever.

I am saddened by his passing. He devoted his life to making Orange County a better place for everybody to live. We will all miss him, and we will never forget him.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. GIANFORTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Montana men's basketball team for an outstanding season and to wish them success in the 2018 NCAA Tournament.

The Grizzlies were regular season champions of the Big Sky Conference, going 16 to 2 in conference play.

Last weekend, the squad won the Big Sky Tournament.

They begin their journey in the NCAA Tournament tonight with a first-round game in Wichita, Kansas.

The Grizzlies will be strong contenders. Their defense is relentless, leading the Big Sky Conference this year. Every player on the floor contributes to their offense. They represent the spirit of Montana.

Congratulations also to Montana head coach Travis DeCuiere, who was named Coach of the Year in the Big Sky Conference. In his fourth season at the helm, he guided the Grizzlies to a 26-7 record and their first NCAA Tournament appearance since 2013.

I know the folks in the Treasure State will join me in saying: "Up With Montana."

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GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. SCHNEIDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Madam Speaker, yesterday marked 1 month since the gunman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School cut short the lives of 17 students and teachers. These tragedies have become so common that the response of this Congress is practically routine: thoughts and prayers are offered, moments of silence held, and then we move on with no specific action on gun violence.

Madam Speaker, this is not enough. We need to heed the call of thousands of students across the country who organized walkouts and events with a simple message for us: It is time to act.

We need to be able to look these students in the eye and say: "We are doing

everything we can to protect you." But for too long, this institution has refused to do just that. We are not considering legislation to pass universal background checks. We have not debated restricting the sale of military assault weapons, bump stocks, and high-capacity magazines, or even lifting the ban on preventing our government from researching gun safety solutions.

Yesterday we did pass a bill with important resources for school safety, including a bipartisan provision I introduced with Representative MIKE BOST to help schools install panic buttons. That is an important first step, but really protecting our children is not possible without concrete measures to reduce gun violence.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the wisdom of the young people in our districts, and let's all find the courage to pass sensible gun safety laws and, finally, to save lives.

HONORING VETERAN HOMER VAUGHN WAGNON, JR.

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Madam Speaker, I rise in memory of Homer Vaughn Wagnon, Jr., a veteran of World War II who left this world on November 29, having "just satisfied his life's ambitions," per the obituary provided for him.

Mr. Wagnon served our country in the infantry, fighting his way across France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany as he and his fellow members of the Greatest Generation pushed back against tyranny.

He continued his service to our country in private business, helping to build a post-World War II incredible economy as a mechanical engineer. His range of new products included mechanical rubber goods, radio and TV equipment, and items for naval ships and aircraft applications.

Mr. Wagnon leaves behind the love of his life, Darlene Raitt Wright, and Wagnon's 6 children, 11 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren. His grandson Tariq Bokhari followed his grandfather's example: In distinction, he now serves as an outstanding member of the Charlotte City Council.

Madam Speaker, please join me in expressing condolences to the Wagnon family.

TRUMP IN SAN DIEGO

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, President Trump was in my hometown of San Diego this week. He went to inspect prototypes for his proposed border wall, a wall California doesn't want, doesn't need, and is an overly simplistic approach to a complex issue.